A Study of the Modern-Day Scholarship and Primary Sources on Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī and The Khalwatī-Gulshanī Order of Dervishes

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Historical Background of the Gulshanīs[1]

As an offshoot of the well-known late medieval Khalwatīyya order[2] in Iran and Azerbaijan, the followers/disciples of Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī (d. 940/1534), a

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1   The ideas presented in this section were discussed in depth in Side Emre's *Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī and the Khalwatī-Gulshanī Order: Power Brokers in Ottoman Egypt* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017) (hereafter Emre, *Power Brokers*).

2   Modern-day scholarship examines the status of the Khalwatīyya as a popular order emerging in Azerbaijan and spreading their influence in Anatolia, Arab lands, and the Balkans where their members gained popularity among Turkish-speaking communities establishing one of the common denominators of their cultural, social, and religious heritage. In Anatolia, Shirvani's ordained successors established various sub-branches in Adrianople, Istanbul or Kastamanonu in approximately two generations following his death. I would like to thank one of my readers for clarifying the speading of the Khalwatī sub-branches in Anatolia. For details see, John J. Curry, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire: The Rise of the Halveti Order, 1350-1650*, Edinbugh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010 (Curry, *Transformation*); Mustafa Aşkar, "Bir Türk Tarikatı Olarak Halvetiyye'nin Tarihi Gelişimi ve Halvetiyye Silsilesinin Tahlili," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyet Fakültesi Dergisi* 39 (1999); for the transmission of Khalwatīyya to the Ottoman lands, please see Hasan Karataş, "The Ottomanization of the Halvetiye Sufi Order: A Political Story Revisited" *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association.* 1:1-2, (November 2014); and "A Shaykh, a Prince and a Sack of Corn: An Anatolian Sufi becomes Ottoman" *Living in the Ottoman Realm: Creating, Contesting, and Resisting Ottoman Identity from the 13-20th Century*, edited by Christine Isom-Verhaaren and Kent. F. Schull. Indiana University Press, 2016. The order ⬥

charismatic Turcoman Sufi born in Aqquyunlu ruled Diyarbakir in c. 1440, traveled to the broader Islamicate Near Eastern political zone from Iran, and into territories contested among the Ottomans, Safavids, Dulkadirlioğlu, and the Mamluks. Following their escape from Iran, and relocation in Anatolia, prompted by the c. 1500 overthrow of the Sunni Aqquyunlus by the Safavids, the *Shaykh Ibrāhimīs* (followers of Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī) navigated the conflict-ridden geography that saw major societal disruptions due to the competing regional polities. During a decade long stay in Anatolia (c. 1500-1507/10), Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī grew to exert local influence in provincial courtly circles and showed support for different political factions, establishing local networks of power that gave promises of a legacy well beyond the confines of provincial Sufi communities. Sometime after the arrival, and settlement in Mamluk Cairo c. 1507-10, the *Shaykh Ibrāhimīs* began building a lodge in Cairo and, in time, adopted the name of Gulshanīs. The years leading up to the Ottoman conquest of Mamluk Egypt in 1517 placed the Gulshanīs at the historical cusp of what Ottomanist scholars view as a watershed moment for the empire. The conquest hailed the Ottoman sultan's claim to caliphal titelature—granting the religious right to rule over all Muslim populations in the Arab lands—and endorsed the sultan's status as the servitor and protector of the holy cities of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, all formerly under the dominion of the Mamluk Sultanate. In addition, between 1453-c.1600, as Ottoman imperial ambitions expanded to include frontiers in the Balkans, Anatolia, Iran, and the Arab lands, the character of the Ottoman state underwent a transformation—from a military-conquest state to a bureaucratic state committed to preserving territorial integrity and defining its religious identity through Sunnism. In the provinces, the relations between the state and society were constantly tested and negotiated as regional customs and laws were absorbed and incorporated into existing Ottoman practices in local governance. This dialogue was driven and negotiated by protagonists from the imperial center interacting with local power brokers, holy men, popular Sufis who also acted as mediators. The Khalwatī-Gulshanīs, in the decades after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, were active participants in this complex process under the leadership of their saintly and charismatic founder Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī.

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originated in the Anatolian fraternities of the eighth/fourteenth century. While 'Umar al-Ḫalvetī (d. 800/1397) of Gīlān in Iran was considered the original founder or master (*pīr*), Sayyid Yaḥyā Shīrvānī in Baku in Azerbaijan was regarded as the second master (*pīr-i sānī*) (See Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000, 264–265; Curry, *Transformation*, 55–59). Shīrvānī's followers and officially ordained successors (*ḫalīfes*) founded numerous sub- branches of the Khalwatīyya in Arab lands, the Balkans, and Anatolia, and particularly in centers like Cairo, Aleppo, Adrianople, Kastomunu, Istanbul, Sivas, and Diyarbakır. Among Shīrvānī's disciples was Dede 'Ömer Rūşenī (d. 892/1487) who was Gulshanī's spiritual master.

As political/administrative rule in Egypt transitioned from the Mamluks to the Ottomans, Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī and his dervishes did not serve as socially aloof and private spiritual guides that we find in portrayals of Sufis in contemporaneous chronicles on Egypt. Instead, they acted as forces of socio-political action and ambition, seeking to influence public opinion, exerting their reach and guidance to members of local Ottoman administrative/military clientele through their vibrant weekly rituals in their lodge. They actively sought to initiate members of the Ottoman military and administrative personnel into their path. They were intricately involved with the politics and social networks in Ottoman Egypt and the wider Ottoman realms. Their cultural outreach, which also relied on the transmission of the founder's literary works penned in Anatolian Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, communicated their *adab* to interested audiences. Following a similar pattern with the order's success during Gulshanī's lifetime, in the post-founder years, the connections, interactions, and dialogues of the Gulshanīs extended to a wide range of individuals as the chronicles and narrative sources of the period (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) demonstrate: Ottoman commanders, sultans, intellectuals, *literati*, courtly elites, and laymen; Mamluk sultans and soldiers; Arab judges and scholars; itinerant Iranian and Anatolian mystics, pilgrims became affiliates, followers, friends, or members of the order. Additionally, the Gulshanīyya networks included members of other Sufi paths ranging from the Naqshbandīs to the Malāmīs, their Egyptian neighbors and the "people of Egypt". These sources show that, they sought patronage and protection from ruling and military elites—like many of their Khalwatī peers in different regions of the Islamicate World. In return, they bestowed *baraka*, provided moral support, and counsel, for those who sought it. Their Cairo lodge served as a refuge to those who needed it. At times some Gulshanīyya members ran afoul with the Ottoman ruling establishment because of public actions and speech considered controversial or blasphemous against what came to be defined later in scholarship as a "mainstream Sunnism". Queries about their status were responded by a number of *fatwas* drawn by leading Ottoman jurists. In the end, the Gulshanīs, while having built a controversial reputation, which at times found criticism because it was thought to be "outside the circle of Sunna," prevailed. The Gulshanīyya literary corpus, beginning with the works of/attributed to the founder and including those penned by the prolific Gulshanīyya dervishes/poets in subsequent decades after the founder's death in 1534, gave shape to the order's *Miṣrī* Khalwatī discursive mystical culture. This literature was diverse in content, i.e.: it drew from a number of medieval mystical traditions, prominent mystics, and textual inspirations, and it was also a complex product of its changing socio-political environment in Egypt and the Ottoman realms.

Dervishes in residence at the Cairo lodge produced early Gulshanīyya mystical literature while Gulshanī composed works mainly in Anatolian Turkish and Persian,

referring to himself as an *'Acemī*, a non-Arabic speaker from Persia. Gulshanī was mainly influenced by the late medieval Anatolian frontier literary lore as well as by his spiritual mentor Rūshanī's works. These inspirations were influential in forming the order's literature, reflecting social messages that emphasized the inclusive *meşreb* (natural disposition) and an open-mindedness regarding the practices of other mystical paths after his death. A distinctive Gulshanīyya mystical culture developed alongside the order's literature, with a flexible and expansive inspirational and devotional palette. This literature reflects different doctrines, beliefs, rituals, practices, teachings, and discourses of various mystical orders, with no categorical boundaries in piety or confessional affiliations. For instance, the order's culture included a distinctive *melāmī* ("path of [self] blame") orientation, which can be observed in its literature and in the behaviors of some of its members. The reputation of some dervishes as ecstatically oriented and potentially dangerous to the established social order and the Prophet's *Sunna* is based on this component. However, other sources of spiritual influence were also prominent for the Gulshanīyya culture and literature. Among these influences works of Celaleddīn-i Rūmī and Ibn al-'Arabī deserve special mention. Some pieces of the Gulshanīyya corpus were copied under the supervision of Gulshanī and became popular throughout the sixteenth century in Egypt and the Ottoman domains. They include Turkish and Persian *dīwān* collections, an Arabic *dīwān*, and the *Ma'nevī*, a Persian verse-book penned as a *nazīre*—literary imitation—of Rūmī's *Masnawī-i ma'nawī*, to name a few. Numerous manuscript versions and redactions of poetry collections scattered in libraries across Turkey and Egypt attest to the diversity of the order's audiences. [3]

The Gulshanīyya literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was not a replica of the doctrines or teachings of the order's founder. The discursive shifts in the corpus over time give clues about the Gulshanīs' efforts in forming an enduring cultural legacy informed both by practical and literary priorities in Egypt and outside of Egypt. Most importantly, the diversity of literary inspirations in the Khalwatī-Gulshanī literature, beginning with the mystical thought and piety of Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī, as the saintly founder of the order, and the trajectory of the subsequent Gulshanī literary production after his death, demonstrates how the Gulshanīyya not only secured a social niche for itself in Ottoman Egypt but also established an enduring cultural legacy as a popular Sufi institution of the communities identifying as *Misrī*, *Rūmī*, and *Acemī*. By the latter half of the sixteenth century, the Gulshanīyya grew into a more widely accepted Khalwatī offshoot within the Ottoman-Sufi *milieu* with a network of lodges expanded throughout

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3   Different versions of Gulshanī's poety collections can be found in manuscript libraries in Istanbul. Gulshanī, Anatolian Turkish *Dīvān*, İstanbul, Millet Library, Ali Emiri Manzum Eserler, no. 37 and İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Manuscript Library, T890; Gulshanī, Persian *Dīvān*, İstanbul Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Fatih 3866.

the Ottoman realms, including the Balkans and provincial centers in Anatolia, from Egypt to Syria, Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem.

Modern-day Scholarship on the Gulshanīs

The existing scholarship on the Gulshanīs is extensive. In this section, I will provide an overview of the major and ground breaking scholarly works on the Khalwatī-Gulshanīs, their history and literature for the purpose of contextualizing the trajectory of modern-day research on the founder, Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī, and the prolific Gulshanīs.[4]

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4   Scholarly literature on the Khalwatī order, and its sub-branches, are not included in our evaluation here. However, works that can be titled as "classical" Sufism studies, many published between the 1960s and the 2000s on the sociopolitical/religious and cultural dynamics of Sufi movements, orders, and socially active Sufi masters, prove instrumental in historically contextualizing particular Sufi cultures and orders, such as the Gulshanīs. In that framework, see Ernst Bannerth, "La Khalwatīyya en Egypte: Quelques aspects de la vie d'une confrerie," Melanges de l'Institut Dominiciane d'Etudes Orientales du Caire 8, 1964–1966, 1–75; Bannerth, "Über den Stifter und Sonderbrauch der Demirdasiyya Sufis in Kairo," Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 62, 1969, 116–132; Bannerth, "Islamische Wallfahrtstätten Kairos," *Schriften des Österreichischen Kulturinstituts Kairo* 2, 1987. Th. Emil Homerin, "The Study of Islam within Mamluk Domains" (http://mamluk.uchicago.edu/ MSR_IX-2_2005– Homerin.pdf); B. G. Martin, "A Short History of the Khalwatī Order of Dervishes," in *Scholars, Saints and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500*, ed. Nikkie R. Keddie, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, 275–305; Nathalie Clayer, *Mystique sétat et société: les Halvetis dans l'aire balkanique de la fin du XVe siècle à nos jours*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994; Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200–1550*, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1994; Éric Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme en Egypte et en Syrie: Sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans, orientations, spirituelles et enjeux culturels*, Damascus: l'Institut français d'Etudes Arabes de Damas, 1995; Derin Terzioğlu, "Sufi and Dissident in the Ottoman Empire: Niyazi-i Mısri (1618–1694)" Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1999; John J. Curry, "The Intersection of Past and Present in the Genesis of an Ottoman Sufi Order: The Life of Cemal el-Halveti (d. 900/1494 or 905/1499) and The Origins of The Halvetî Tarîqa," *Journal of Turkish Studies*, 32.1, 2008, 121–141; Curry, Transformation; Curry, "Defending the Cult of Saints in Seventeenth Century Kastamonu: Ömer el-Fuadi's Contribution to Religious Debate in Ottoman Society," *Frontiers of Ottoman Society: State, Province, and the West*, ed. Colin Imber and Keiko Kiyotaki, London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005, 139–148; Curry, "The Growth of Turkish Language:Hagiographical Literature Within the Halveti Order of the 16th and 17th Centuries," ed. Hasan Celal Güzel et al., *The Turks*, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2002, 3:912–920; Hasan Karataş, "The City as a Historical Actor: The Urbanization and Ottomanization of the Halvetiye Sufi Order by the City of Amasya in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2011. Works that include sections on the Gulshanīs include Reşat Öngören's "XVI. Asırda Anadolu'da Tasavvuf", Ph.D. diss., Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 1996 as well as the same author's *Osmanlılarda Tasavvuf: Anadolu'da Sufiler, Devlet ve Ulema (XVI. Yüzyıl)*, İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2000 and Ahmet Yaşar Ocak's *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998 (Ocak, *Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*) also deserve mention for their contributions to the history of the Gulshanīs. In Ocak's book, especially see ↠

I. Foundational Biographical Literature

The earliest biographical publication on Gulshanī was by Kasım Kufralı ("Gülşeni," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi: İslâm âlemi coğrafya, etnoğrafya ve biyografya lûgati*, 1st ed., ed. M. Th. Houtsma et.al. (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940-1986: 835-836). After Kufralı's contribution, Tahsin Yazıcı is reputed as the first scholar to study Gulshanī extensively. His initial contribution was "İbrahim-i Gülşenī ve Tarikatı," Türkoloji Zümresi Mezuniyet Travayı, no. 194 (Lisans tezi, Istanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi Türkiyat Enstitüsü, 1945). A version of this thesis was edited and expanded for his doctoral studies: "Şeyh İbrahim-i Gülşeni: Hayatı, Eserleri, Tarikatı" (Doktora tezi, Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih ve Coğrafya Fakültesi, 1951). His well-known edited volume, *Muḥyī-yi Gülşenī, Menāḳib-i İbrāhīm-i Gülşenī ve Şemlelizāde Aḥmed Efendi Şīve-i Ṭarīḳat-ı Gülşeniye,* edited Tahsin Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982) is his third study on the Gulshanīyya founder and represents an updated version of his earlier research. In the lengthy introduction to the *Menāḳib-i İbrāhīm-i Gülşenī,* Yazıcı provides basic biographical information on the political, administrative, and religious actors that Gulshanī, his family, and the members of this order, interacted with over the years in a vast geography including the Aqquyunlus, Safavids, Mamluks, and the Ottomans. In an extended article on Gulshanī in *the Encyclopedia of Islam's* second edition, Yazıcı edits his conclusions previously published in the introduction to the *Menāḳib*. For a thorough content comparison of biographical entries on Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī, consult Tahsin Yazıcı's "Gulshanī," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed. (E. J. Brill) and Kasım Kufralı's article titled "Gülşeni" in *İslam Ansikopedisi,* 1st ed., vol. 4, 1948. Nihat Azamat's article "İbrahim-i Gülşenī" in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, cilt 21, 2000: 301-304) also gives the chronology of Gulshanī's life as well as a list of his known works with reference to a wide array of primary and secondary historical, narrative, and literary sources. All of these above mentioned encyclopedia entries must be evaluated alongside Mustafa Kara's "*Gülşeniyye*" entry in the *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, cilt 14, 1996: 256-259) as well as Doris Behrens-Abouseif's "Ibrāhīm Gulseni Kulliyesi" entry in the *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, cilt 21, 2000, 304-305).

II. Single-Authored and Scholarly Monographs

In the category of single-authored and scholarly monographs, Himmet Konur's *İbrahim Gülşeni: Hayatı, Eserleri, Tarikatı* (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2000) is the

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pages, 313-327. Expansive volumes of collective essays such as *Türkiye'de Tarikatlar: Tarih ve Kültür,* editör: Semih Ceyhan, Istanbul: ISAM Yayınları, 2015 and *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf ve Sufiler,* hazırlayan: Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2014 also include brief entries and information on the Gulshanīs.

first in-depth work on Gulshanī's life and order in Turkish.[5] Konur provides an analysis beginning with a discussion of comparative origins of *tasawwuf* and mysticism, Islamic mysticism, the nature of *tasawwuf*, its progressive stages of historical development, and the conversion of Central Asian Turks into Islam in c. 700.[6] In his analysis, Konur says that the unofficial critical/adversarial nature of Sufi orders/mystics against the wrongs they observed in the "Ottoman establishment" mostly surfaced around individuals who strapped themselves around the "charisma of an order." He argues that such attitudes caused the essentially non-political and non-adversarial nature of Sufi *ṭarīqas* to become adversarial against political authority. In his perception, during the rule of the Ottomans (chronology unidentified) this antagonism/opposition (T. "*muhalefet*") against the state was done in a manner, which can be described as bitter/sweet (T. "*tatlı sert*") and mostly by Sufis who stood by the side of political authority. He further argues that the "Ottoman state" (under which sultan's rule remains unidentified) took the criticism voiced by Sufis seriously and listened to their advice, aiming to correct/rectify the mistakes being done. In this section, the author does not provide specific examples to showcase these claims. Konur's perceptions of the "Ottoman Empire", "Ottoman state", and the state's interactions with Sufi orders (A. sing. *ṭarīqa*) represent a conceptual loop hole that assumes the Ottoman state and society as timeless and unchanging monolithic phenomena or entities. Such an understanding of the empire, state, and its administration, as well as interactions of its ruling and religious hierarchies with its populations presents the reader with problems. In his later discussion on persecution of Sufis under Sultan Süleymān's rule, he contrarily argues that mystics who were executed by the state during Süleymān's rule suffered such fates because of the state's fears of unrest and rebellion, without outlining the larger historical events/and political context(s) in question. Thus he contradicts his earlier claim that the interactions of Sufis and saints were bitter/sweet with Sufis siding with political authority. In fact, as he later concludes, also in contradiction to his earlier discussion, there is no straightforward/clear cut answer(s) or absolute category/(ries) as to why "some" Sufis suffer persecution/execution in one given period, while others, who might have taken similar positions in another period, do not.[7]

In laying out the political, social, and cultural background of Gulshanī's lifetime, Konur presents a concise historical overview with segments of Gulshanī's biography, including the Aqquyunlu and Mamluk periods, highlighting in separate sub-sections topics such as "*Tasawwuf* in Egypt," and "Corruption/

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5   Konur's original project was his Ph.D. thesis, "İbrahim Gülşeni: Hayatı, Eserleri, Görüşleri", Ph.D. diss., Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 1998.

6   Konur, 13-25.

7   Ibid., 75-76.

misbehaviors among *ṭarīqa* members." Before passing onto the detailed biography of Gulshanī, he provides information on Egypt under Ottoman rule, "tasawwuf under the Ottomans," "'*ulema/meşayih* relations" which special reference to Kemalpashazade and Gulshanī's interactions, "*padişah/meşayih* interactions" focusing on Sultan Selīm and Sultan Süleymān.[8] In the chapter where Konur details Gulshanī's biography, he begins his account with a summary analysis of the available narrative/biographical/hagiographical sources on Gulshanī beginning with sixteenth-century texts and ending with twentieth-century works.[9] Konur relates the miracles attributed to Gulshanī in detail as well as the contours of the shaykh's historical life relying mainly on Muhyī-i Gulshanī's *Menāḳib*, as well as other authors including Ata'i, Mecdi, Latifi, Salahuddin el-Mevlevi, and Hulvi.[10] Konur depicts a pro-Ottoman and establishment-friendly understanding of Gulshanī, relying mainly, and without questioning, on the data found in pro-Gulshanī hagiographical/biographical sources. His evaluation does not include the available Arabic historical sources but includes a select number of narrative and biographical sources in Arabic that has information on Gulshanī.[11] Konur's last chapter is an evaluation of Gulshanī's personality and ideas, which represents a more nuanced conceptualized section of the book.[12]

In this chapter, Konur sheds light on Gulshanī's identity as a *mutasawwıf*, Gulshanī's spiritual education, and the influence of Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 637/1240), Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235), and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273) on the shaykh's ideas and works. His narrative includes separate short sections on the Gulshanīyya order, the order's *zikr* and *evrād*, Gulshanīyya *tāc*, the order's *silsile*, Gulshanī's successsors, *tekke*s, literary personality, and works, as well as an analysis of the shaykh's political identity—which presents methodological issues. Konur's evaluations and discussions of Gulshanī's understanding on the following themes and concepts including those on "*varlık*", *aşk, akl, kalender, melamet, rind, Sūfī, tālib,* and *kabz-bast* are in-depth and represents the author's nuanced thinking on how Gulshanī formed his own spiritual path.

Drawing a conceptual and methodological contrast to Konur's portrayal of Gulshanī and his order, Side Emre's recent book, *Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī and the Khalwatī-Gulshanī Order: Power Brokers in Ottoman Egypt*, (Leiden, Boston:

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8   Ibid., 57-86.

9   Ibid., 87-92.

10 Ibid., 92-104; 104-146.

11 Ibid., 79-80 and the corresponding footnotes 51-74.

12 Ibid., 147-231. See pages 181-187 for Konur's discussion of the political identity of Gulshanī. This section relies almost exclusively on Muhyī's *Menāḳib*. Konur takes the information provided by Muhyī at face value and without critical evaluation and this posits a methodological issue.

Brill, 2017) provides a revisionist and critical evaluation of Gulshanī's life (in a geography surrounding eastern Anatolia, Iran, and Egypt) and the history of the Gulshanīyya order in Egypt and the Ottoman realms.[13] The conceptual background of the book proposes that throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Muslim world became a cradle in which Sufi brotherhoods/*ṭarīqas* abounded as powerful models of religious and social organization. Mystics and holy men became sources of spiritual counsel and provided venues of legitimization, via their claims of true knowledge of God, for those who sought to accumulate and safeguard political power. Expectations that the *mahdi*, the savior, would appear to restore godly justice and order under a single universal leadership with one religion manifested itself in the diffusion of an apocalyptic and messianic discourse. In this setting, the book proposes that Gulshanī played a socially and politically mobile role, established himself as a holy man, and took advantage of the conflict-ridden environment of plural doctrines and clashing pieties becoming a regional power broker. The book deconstructs the opinions given in primary hagiographical sources on Gulshanī that have been appropriated and interpreted such that the shaykh was depicted as a *ḳutb-mahdi* (pole-messiah, axis or pole of the time, the hidden sovereign of the spiritual hierarchy) who had survived the trial and persecution of the central Ottoman government in Istanbul.[14] Accordingly, one of the points made in this book highlights the idea that Gulshanī, while considered outside the conceptual boundaries of *ehl-i sünnet* (people of the Prophet's Sunna) and hence violating the basic tenets of Ottoman official religious ideology during the first half of the Ottoman Sultan Süleyman's reign (r. 926–74/1520–66), nevertheless survived repetitive accusations of heresy and political dissent during his lifetime. The possible reasons and the mentalities that created them are also investigated in a separate chapter.[15]

Emre investigates Gulshanī's life and career deploying both a chronological and thematic narrative (c. 1440s-c. 1600) and critical analysis of hagiographical, biographical, narrative, literary, archival, and historical sources in Ottoman Turkish and Arabic to formulate a story outside the narrative parameters limited to the 'life and deeds' of the 'eponymous founder.' To understand how the Gulshanīs impacted state and society over time, the book emphasizes the scope of the Khalwatī-Gulshanīs' transformation in the sixteenth century, as they became a popular and established Sufi institution in Egypt by the seventeenth century. By examining this Sufi order's history as political rule transitioned from the Mamluks to the Ottomans, this study questions the conception of a "provincial

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13 Emre's book is based on the same author's doctoral dissertation (University of Chicago, 2009) titled "İbrahim-i Gülşeni (ca. 1441–1534): Itinerant Saint and Cairene Ruler." See ft. 1 for the citation of the book.

14 For a discussion of this concept see Ocak, *Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 313-318.

15 Emre, *Power Brokers*, 209-248.

periphery—Egypt" that was ruled strictly and unilaterally from an "imperial center—Istanbul." The book's focus on Islamic polities (Akkoyunlu, Safavids, Mamluks, and Ottomans) in which Gulshanī lived in gives an understanding of the complex political dynamics of Gulshanī's time as he actively interacted with the day-to-day politics of his immediate social milieu.

Throughout the book Emre maintains that what made Gulshanī an intriguing and yet challenging topic of study laid in the fact that he was—and remains—characterized by many warring descriptions. For some, he was a religiously controversial Sufi shaykh whose heretical and blasphemous practices caused the persecution of his followers and members of the Gulshanīyya even after his death while the specifics of his controversial character, as well as his piety and public behaviors, remained debated topics during his lifetime. For others, he was the spiritual pole of his time, *quṭb al-zamān*, the saint of all saints. His spiritual legacy was legitimized not only through a genealogy from the Khalwatī chain by way of his mentor Dede 'Umar Rūshanī (d. c. 891/1486), but also through Gulshanīyya genealogies connecting him on his mother's side to Prophet Muhammad. Thus far in modern scholarship, despite the numerous accounts and varying opinions of him that surface in an extensive array of published/unpublished primary sources, little of who he was, what he tried to achieve, and how he succeeded in impacting the larger political and social scene in Anatolia and Egypt has been understood and investigated.

Emre argues that realm of influence in Gulshanī's long career reached into the spiritual and temporal realms; he was known as the Shah/ruler of Egypt, as his biographers depict, especially after the 1517 Ottoman conquest of Mamluk Egypt. She concludes that Gulshanī was at times a dissident figure and a charismatic Sufi *pīr* who was representative of a larger constituency of divergent populations in Anatolia, Iran, Egypt, and Arab lands who defined themselves by their anti-Ottoman sentiments. Gulshanī, from the very beginning of his political-religious career, avoided living in the Ottoman realms. Indeed he settled down in Egypt when the region was under Mamluk rule. During his Mamluk/Ottoman Egypt years, he portrayed himself in a privileged position as an alternative center of saintly authority, relying on his spiritual authority and receiving legitimacy for social action in an environment imbued with messianic expectations. In the end, Gulshanī was the product of the larger socio-political and religious environment—scarred by the emergence of the Shi'ite Safavids in Iran and Anatolia—that was comprised of discontented Turkmen populations who held shifting loyalties and Alid sympathies, and who reacted against Ottoman territorial expansion. Gulshanī's political and religious careers bloomed during the period when Ottoman imperial ambition in Anatolia and the Arab lands was contested.

Emre demonstrates that towards the end of his life, following his interrogation in the Ottoman capital by Sultan Süleymān's ruling/religious elites, Gulshanī was incorporated into the mainstream hagiographical discourse and was depicted in later hagiographical literature as the loyal Ottoman saint of Cairo. However, during his lifetime, the controversial practices that he promoted had grown popular in Cairo and were regarded by some as verging on dissidence; at this time, Cairo was an unstable social and political setting in which Ottoman "Sunnism"—or its presentation as we have it in the literature— was still in the making. In Istanbul, any extant views of Gulshanī as a "heretical Sufi" or political dissident who challenged the Suleymanic regime and Ottoman imperial power in Cairo after Ahmed Pasha's rebellion in 1524 were put to rest. Contrary to what was has been accepted in modern scholarship thus far, neither a categorically defined Ottoman "Sunnism" nor a clearly defined Ottoman religious ideology of the Suleymanic regime existed at the time of Gulshanī's interactions and problems with political authorities. It concludes that during Gulshanī's lifetime, the issues of heresy, accusations of heresy, and controversiality remained flexible and debated topics among the members of the 'ulemā, as several famous heresy trials, or interrogations that took place in the Ottoman Empire of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries depicted.[16]

III. Recent Articles on Gulshanī's Corpus

As a third category, and moving from a historical/political narrative of the Gulshanīs, several recent articles on Gulshanī's literary inspirations and corpus deserves mention. These works showcase the enduring legacy of the Gulshanīyya literature. Muhsin Macit's article titled "Osmanlı Kültür Sanatında Ibrāhīm-i Gülşeni'nin İşlevi" (*Kutadgu Bilig*, sayı: 60, 2012: 193-214) focuses on Gulshanī's literary corpus and contextualizes it in the larger cultural milieu of Ottoman "mystical" belles-lettres. The author also provides a summary evaluation of Gulshanī's literary inspirations, followers, successors, dervish poets/musicians, family members, and Ottoman administrative/religious elites who knew and/or wrote about Gulshanī up until, and including, the nineteenth century. His analysis of the "Gulshanī geography" highlights the scope and reach of the Gulshanī *adab* in Ottoman realms while making a convincing case for its solid impact in Ottoman arts of the early modern period. In that same category, Side Emre's article "Crafting Piety for Success: Gülşeniye Literature and Culture in the Sixteenth Century" (*Journal of Sufi Studies*, 1.1 (2012): 31-75) problematizes scholarship on Islamic mysticism that mostly prioritizes the poetry and mystical teachings of famous Sufi masters but overlooks to historically contextualize them. She explores the mystical thought and piety of Gulshanī, and the order's literary

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16   Ocak, *Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 203-242, 268-327.

production through the poetry and biographies of dervish-authors, and observes that Gulshanī's inspirations formed the contours of the order's early literature and culture. Arguing that the Gulshanīyya culture was an evolving product of its changing socio-political environment, and not a replica of the doctrines of the order's founder, she depicts the shifts in the Gulshanīyya literature, unveiling the order's changing practical priorities, which provided its members with foresight to secure a stable niche for itself in Ottoman Egypt in the sixteenth century.

The same author's second article "A Preliminary Investigation of Ibn 'Arabi's Influence Reflected in the Corpus of İbrahim-i Gulsheni (d.1534) and the Halveti-Gulsheni Order of Dervishes in Egypt" (*Journal of the Muhyīddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* 56 (2014): 67-113) details the impact of the Akbarian school of thought on Gulshanī's select works. One of the goals of this article is to uncover and examine select concepts and ideas of Ibn 'Arabī's school of thought that found reflections in the Gulshanīyya corpus, expanding our current knowledge about Ibn 'Arabī's influence on Turkish- and Persian-speaking Sufis and *ṭuruḳ* in the early modern Islamicate lands. As a precursor to this effort, Erik S. Ohlander's "He Was Crude of Speech": Turks and Arabs in the Hagiographical Imagination of Early Ottoman Egypt (*The Arab Lands in the Ottoman Era: Essays in Honor of Professor Caesar Farah.* Minneapolis: for Early Modern History, University of Minnesota, 2009, 111–135) investigates the intra-communal intersections among the members of the Egyptian Khalwatīyya and challenges our conceptions of Cairene Sufism as political rule transitioned from Mamluks to the Ottomans. Ohlander focuses on the process of how Egyptian Arabs encountered the Ottoman "Turk" in public spaces by examining the interactions of the famed Egyptian Sufi master and author *'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rānī* (d. 972/1565) and Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī, a Khalwatī Sufi and émigré to the Cairene social milieu. His analysis focuses on three overlapping themes: the personal marker of language, the political/economic marker of patronage, and the socio-religious marker of mystical praxis. His conclusions depict that tensions and rivalries between Egyptian and non-Egyptian Sufis relied mostly on issues surrounding patronage, use of public spaces in urban settings, such as Cairo, and who would, and should, get to respond to the spiritual welfare of Muslims communities living side by side in this vibrant and culturally diverse city.

In other article-length studies such as, John J. Curry's "Home is Where the Shaykh Is: The Concept of Exile in the Hagiography of İbrahim-i Gülşeni," (*Al-Masaq* 17, no. 1, March 2005: 47-60), we see deconstruction of hagiographical tropes, such as the "concept of exile". Curry, in his study of Muhyī-i Gulshanī's hagiographical narrative of Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī, argues that as shaykhs of Sunni mystical orders, such as the Khalwatīyya off-shoot Gulshanīyya, were pushed to escape political violence, and settle down in regions that provided solace from the chaos instigated by the rise of the Twelver Shi'a Safavids, their later narratives, such as Muhyī's, detailed, among other topics, the concept of exile in two senses:

physical and metaphorical. Curry argues that Muhyī's idea of exile reflected a separation or estrangement from one's mystical and spiritual guide as it was utilized as a narrative strategy to foster the readers' devotion to the Gulshanīyya while also providing comfort to communities who were forced to relocate to new geographies. A similar hagiographical trope, a theme that highlighted persecution and banishment was also studied by Side Emre in "A Subversive Story of Banishment, Persecution, and Incarceration on the Eve of the Ottoman Conquest of Egypt: İbrahim-i Gülşeni's Mamluk Years 1507/10–1517" (in *Sufism and Society: Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200–1800 C.E.*, ed. John J. Curry and Erik S. Ohlander, London and New York: Routledge, 2011: 201–222). Here the author's aim is to reevaluate Gulshanī's Mamluk years and the modern-day scholarly perceptions that the relationship between Gulshanī and the Mamluks were harmonious. This perception leads to a misleading view of Gulshanī's subsequent attitude toward the Ottomans. Modern scholars mostly regard Gulshanī as an influential *pīr* who provided spiritual guidance to the local Ottoman military constituency, thereby aiding the post-1517 Ottomanization of Egypt. His depiction as a loyal ally of the Ottoman sultans relies on the belief that he was an ascetic-minded Sufi whose primary concern was to engage in reclusive worship, emerging only periodically to form amiable but distant relationships with figures invested with political authority. In that sense, he was seen as a consistently pro-establishment figure under both Mamluk and Ottoman rules, with a biased focus in favor of the latter. This book chapter points out to the agendas of Gulshanī's biographers, ones that are mostly omitted in the complex storylines of the hagiographies and provides a reassessment of his activities under the Mamluks to depict that his relations with the last Mamluk rulers, Qānṣaw al-Ghawrī (r. 906–22/1501–16) and Ṭūmān Bāy (r. 922–3/1516–17) were tense and even confrontational at times.

Complementing aforementioned studies that focus on the literary tropes found in the Gulshanīyya literature is Rüya Kılıç's article titled as "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Gülşeni Tarikati: Genel Bir Yaklaşım Denemesi" (http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/1272/14648.pdf). In this study, Kılıç gives the reader an overview of the history of the Gulshanīs including the activities of the Gulshanīyya members that branched out outside Istanbul in the seventeenth and early twentieth centuries. This concise study introduces relevant archival and literary primary sources for the post-sixteenth century history of the order.

In the final part of this section, I would like to briefly examine Muhyī-i Gulshanī and the most important modern day scholar of Muhyī, Mustafa Koç. Muhyī (d. ca. 1603/4) was the single most productive author and archivist of the Gulshanīs. He is known in today's Ottoman Sufism and historical scholarship mainly as the meticulous hagiographer of Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī. Muhyī lived most of his adult life in the Cairo lodge-complex with his spiritual mentor, Gulshanī's son, and

successor Aḥmed-i Hayalī. Being part of an extensive Gulshanīyya network, he traveled regularly in the wider Ottoman geography meeting with other members of the order while his master was alive. After Hayali's death, Muhyī reached an important position in the Cairo lodge. Subsequently he began establishing intimate connections with select members of the Ottoman ruling elite in Istanbul—such as Sultan Murad III (r. 982-1003/1574-95). His copious literary production played a significant role in Muhyī's popularity at court. Indeed, Muhyī was a prolific writer who authored over two hundred texts spanning from works on ethics, grammar, hagiography, counsel for sultans, and mystical poetry. Baleybelen—the Esperanto-type language—and the dictionary he formulated are being examined today as the first practical product of *lingua sacra*—the first and purest language God was said to have taught to Adam. He was also a self-proclaimed "*Fuṣūṣī*", a dedicated reader, defender, and commentator of Ibn al-'Arabi's metaphysical writings, especially one of al-'Arabi's main works, the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* ("The Bezels of Wisdom").

While Muhyī's overall intellectual contribution to early modern Ottoman letters and culture of Sufism still needs attention, Mustafa Koç's meticulous scholarship and content rich publications on Muhyī and his literary output reflect the importance of Muhyī in Gulshanī studies. Koç's foreword in the *inceleme-metin* (translated and transliterated publication) of the *Reşehât-ı Muhyî* is an important contribution to Sufism studies in general as it reflects the scope and inclusivity of Muhyī's Sufi networks which spanned those of the Gulshanīs and Ahraris in the early modern period. The author's other studies on Muhyī mainly focus on the linguistic and literary contributions of Muhyī to the Gulshanīyya mystical discourse and early modern Ottoman Sufism.[17] Complementing Koç's scholarship, a recent book chapter by Kristof D'hulster titled "A Sufi Performing Empire: Reading Two Unpublished Works of Muhyī-i Gülşenī (d. 1604-05)" addresses the clash between the Ottomans and a group of Bedouins in the 1590s as seen from the eyes of a Gulshanī dervish, Muhyī. D'hulster argues that Muhyī's two different versions of the '*Azāle-Nāme*s—one written in prose and the other

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17   16 Major publications of Mustafa Koç include, *Baleybelen*, Istanbul: Klasik Yayinlar, 2006; "16. Yapılmış Osmanlı Türkçesi Gramer Çalışması: Bünyâd-ı Şi'r-i Ârif", *İstanbul*, 9, 2005, 209-234; "16. yüzyılda Türkçe Yazılmış İzhâr-ı Ezmâr-ı Mâ-tekaddem ve Keşf-i Estâr-ı Merci'ün-ileyh-i Mübhem" Adlı Zamir Kitabı", *V. Ulue4slarası Türk Dili Kurultayı Bildirileri*, 20-26 Eylül 2004, Ankara, 2004, C. 2, s. 2005-2021; "16. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Coğrafyasında Karanlıkta Kalmış Nakşi-Ahrari, Yesevi ve Kubrevi Şeyhleri" *Kutadgu Bilig*, vol. 7, 2005: 213-254; Muhyî-i Gülşenî, *Reşehât-ı Muhyî: Reşehât-ı Aynü'l-Hayât Tercümesi* (İnceleme-Metin), Mustafa Koç, Eyyüp Tanrıverdi, Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Baskanlığı, 2014; Muhyî-i Gülşenî, *Menâkıb-i İbrâhim-i Gülşenî* (İnceleme-Metin), Mustafa Koç, Eyyüp Tanrıverdi, Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Baskanlığı, 2014.

in verse—depict a particular vision of the Ottoman Empire as well as Muhyī's own identity as a Gulshanī and a Hanafi Sunni.[18]

IV. Sources on Khalwatīs, and their sub-branches, from the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Later narrative sources in the *ṭabaqāt* and *teẕkire* genres provide information on the Khalwatī order between eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Ahmed Hilmi Efendi's (d. 1331/1913) *Ziyaret-i Evliya* (published in 1327/1909) has entries on the Khalwatīs and Shabanis, especially ones who were buried in or around Istanbul. In addition, Hüseyin Vassaf's (d. 1347/1929) *Sefīne-i Evliyā* and the *Tezkire-i Meshayih-i Amid* also have entries on the Gulshanīs[19]. The latter includes descendants reaching to the twentieth century in Diyarbakir. Research on the order's history in nineteenth and twentieth century Turkey and Egypt is scanty. Frederick De Jong attributes the diminishing popularity of the Gulshanīyya in Egypt in the second half of the nineteenth century to decline of the Turkish population in the region and he adds that their Turkish/Persian liturgy might explain their continued influence in the central Ottoman Lands. De Jong reviews the existing scholarship on the history of the Khalwatīyya in Egypt and his research constitutes a valuable starting point for the history of Sufism in Post-Ottoman Egypt (including numerous Khalwatī offshoots) as well as the nineteenth century Sufi institutions in Egypt. Indeed the post-seventeenth century cultural and political history of the order remains virtually unstudied today and constitutes a rich path for the Gulshanīyya researcher.[20]

Manuscript Sources on Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī and the Gulshanīs[21]

One of the main sources for the history of the order is Muhyī-i Gulshanī's (b. 934/1528-d. c.1014/1606) hagiography, *Menāqib-i İbrāhīm-i Gülşenī*. Muḥyī began the *Menāḳib* in 976/1569, after serving as the *türbedār* (overseer of a tomb or mausoleum) the Cairo lodge for almost twelve years.[22] He gathered information

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18   Kristof D'hulster, "A Sufi Performing Empire: Reading Two Unpublished Works of Muhyī-i Gülşenī (d. 1604-05)" *Osmanlı'da Ilm-i Tasavvuf* , eds. Ercan Alkan, Osman Sacid Arı, Istanbul: ISAR Yayınları, 2018, 701-734.

19   Osmanzade Hüseyin Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliyā-yı Ebrār Şerh-i Esmār-ı Esrā*r, Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, no.2305-2309; Hüseyin Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliyâ*, 5 vols., İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2006.

20   Frederick De Jong, "Opposition to Sufism in Twentieth-Century Egypt (1900-1970): A Preliminary Survey" in *Islamic Mysticism Contested*, eds. Frederick De Jong and Bernd Radtke, Brill, 1999.

21   The primary source documents written about the Gulshanīs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is extensive. In this section I will summarize the main hagiographical, biographical, and historical sources. Also see Emre, *Power Brokers*, 30-41.

22   For an analysis of Gulshanī 's hagiographers, see Emre, "Crafting Piety," 35-39.

orally from his *pīr*, Aḥmed-i Hayalī—Gulshanī's son and successor to the order's leadership—as well as other fellow Gulshanīyya members, sympathizers, and affiliates of the order. He probably rewrote his text once before finishing the composition in c. 1012/1604, almost seventy years after Gulshanī died and nearly thirty-five years after his master Hayalī's passing. Muḥyī's narrative draws the outlines of the founder's connection and descend from Oghuz Ata and the Qayi tribe emphasizing the prestige and power Gulshanī inherited with that specific designation. Writing for Ottoman audiences in the sixteenth century and at times embellishing his account to glorify the founder, Muḥyī informs his audiences that Gulshanī was endowed with the "power to rule." The *Menāḳib*, in addition to being a hagiography of the Gulshanīyya's founder, also depicts the historical-cultural, political and religious background of the late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Islamic lands, connecting the early modern courts of the Aqquyunlus, Ottomans, and Mamluks. Another important source for Gulshanī's life—which remains today in scholarly margins—is penned by 'Ubūdī-yi Gulshanī—a fellow Gulshanīyya member and a contemporary of Muḥyī. His version appears alongside his Ottoman Turkish translation of an Arabic pilgrimage (*ziyāra*) text, *Murshid al Zuwwar ila Qubūr al-abrār*, by a thirteenth-century writer, Muwaffaq al-Din Abd al-Rahman Ibn al-Faqih 'Uthman (d. 614/5-1218/19).[23] The original was intended primarily as a guide for the pilgrims to al-Jabal al-Muqattam and to the tombs and graves of the holy dead in Egypt. 'Ubūdī's translation appends a lengthy section on Gulshanī, itself mostly abridged and altered from Muḥyī's work, to the second section of Ibn 'Uthman's original text. 'Ubūdī's text further departs from its sources in its dedication to a high-ranking member of the seventeenth century Ottoman military elite, Ahmed I's (r. 1011/1603-1025/1617) former *vezīr* (minister in the imperial council) and *ḳapūdān pasha* (captain or commander in the Ottoman navy) Öküz Mehmed Pasha (d. 1029/1620).[24] It is likely that 'Ubūdī hoped for patronage from Mehmed Pasha; Muḥyī, on the other hand, produced his hagiography exclusively for the Gulshanīyya dervishes, future novices, and posterity, and omitted any such dedication to political figures. 'Ubūdī began his composition while serving at the lodge between 1005/1597 and 1023/1615, completing it sometime in the late 1590s, before the death of Shaykh Seyyid Hasan Ali Efendi (d.1023/1615), the fourth successor to Gulshanī. The first version of

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23   Muwaffaq al-Din Abd al-Rahman Ibn al-Faqih 'Uthman, *Murshid al- zuwwār ilā qubūr al-abrār*, ed. Muhammad Fahti Abu Bakr, Cairo: al-Dār al-Misrīyah al-Lubnānīyah, 1995.

24   'Ubūdī, *Tercüme-i Kitāb-i Mürşidü'z-züvvār fi ziyareti'- Karafa ve'l-ebrar be emr-i vezir Muhammed Paşa be sırru'l-llah ma yaşa Kapudan-ı sabık*, Ankara, Milli Kütüphane Library Nadir Eserler section manuscript YZ A. 5279; İstanbul Yapı Kredi Library, copied from Dar al-Kutub al-Mısriyah – Cairo MS 2822T and as cited in Eleazar Birnbaum, "Turkish Collective Biographical Manuscripts in Cairo University Library II: Works by 'Ubūdī Gülşeni, Nazmizade Murtaza, Gazzizade Abdüllatif and the 'Anonymous' Tezkiretü'l-Evliya," *Journal of Turkish Studies*, 21, 1997, 80-83.

'Ubūdī's text, dating from the 1590s, reveals a pro-Ottoman agenda that further enhanced Muḥyī 's image of the founder as the famous Ottoman saint of Egypt of the sixteenth century. 'Ubūdī's version found wide circulation later on when it was printed as the *Menāḳib-ı Evliyā-ı Mıṣr*.[25]

The third most important source on the Gulshanī and the Gulshanīyya is Mahmud Cemaleddin Ḥulvī's (d.1064/1654) *Lemezāt-ı Hulviyye ez Lema'at-ı 'Ulviyye*, also referred to as *Kitāb-ı Lemezāt*.[26] The *Lemezāt* remains today as the earliest and most detailed biographical narrative on the different Khalwatīyya branches. It was composed at a later date than Muḥyī and 'Ubūdī's hagiographies. Ḥulvī started composing the *Lemezāt* in 1018/1609 and finished it after his stay at the Cairo Gulshanīyya lodge in 1030/1621. Ḥulvī compiled stories of every Khalwatī *silsile* and extended his narrative to encompass events and details until 1022/1614, preserving valuable information from earlier sources. In 1028/1619, Ḥulvī, like other well-known Khalwatīyya biographers, traveled to Cairo after a pilgrimage, but this was some fifteen years after Muḥyī had passed away and, at that point, Ḥulvī had already been initiated into another Khalwatī sub-branch—the Sunbuliyya. He thus presumably had less motivation than Muḥyī or 'Ubūdī to enhance Gulshanī's prestige in his relation of events. The *Lemezāt* is a compendium, a detailed biographical dictionary of many stories related to the shayhs of the Khalwatīyya and its many branches, including Rūshanīyya, Gulshanīyya, Demirdashīyya, and Sunbulīyya. Ḥulvī, like Muḥyī and 'Ubūdī, provides supernatural stories illustrating the saintliness of the shaykhs.

Another important hagio-biographical source that has extended sections on the Gulshanīs was written in the late seventeenth century and is titled the *Tuḥfetü'l-Mücāhidīn ve Behçetü'ẕ-Ẕakirīn*.[27] The *Tuḥfet* is comprised of entries on Khalwatī and Gulshanī shaykhs. Its author, Ḥacı 'Ali Efendi (d.1075/1665), based his work on Nev'izāde 'Ata'i (d. 1043/1634). In the *Tuhfet*, Ḥacı 'Ali Efendi gives an extensive account of the entire Khalwatīyya, including the Rūshanīyya-Gulshanīyya sub-branch. Within that section, he devotes a large section to the Gulshanīyya *silsile*. He also includes detailed information about the shayhs who were affiliated with the Gulshanīyya under each successive *post-niṣīn* in the *der-kenār* sections. His list includes: İbrāhīm-i Gulshanī, Ḥasan-i Zarifī, Sādık 'Alī Dede, Ashık Musā Dede Edirnevī, Emīr Aḥmed-i Hayalī, Ferhād Dede, Ebu'l-Kāsim Mahmūd, 'Ali Safvetī ibn Emīr Aḥmed-i Khıyalī, Amedī Ḥasan Dede, Yūsuf Mezheb, Mecnūn

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25 *Menāḳıb-ı Evliyā-yı Mıṣr*, Bulak: Dar üt-Tibaat il-Amire, 1846.

26 Mahmud Cemaleddin Hulvi, *Kitāb-ı Lemezāt*, Istanbul Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi 281 (copied in 1742/43) and *Lemezāt-ı Ḥulvīyye Ez Lemezāt-ı 'Ulvīyye* (*Yüce Velilerin Tatlı Halleri*), translated by Mehmed S.Tayşi, İstanbul, 1993.

27 Ḥacı'Āli Efendi, *Tuḥfet'ül-Mücāhidīn ve Behçetü'ẕ-Ẕakirīn*, İstanbul Nuruosmaniye Library, no. 2293.

'Ali Dede, Mevlānā Sheyh Ebū'l- Ḥabīb Ḥasan ibn Aḥmed-i Khıyalī, ʿÖmer Dede ʿArşī, Ḥasan Gavsī, Dervish ʿAbdullāh Geylānī, Sheyh İbrāhim ibn Sheyh Ḥasan ibn Aḥmed-i Hayalī ibn İbrāhīm-i Gulshanī, and Dervish Ḥulvī. The *Tuhfet* omits information on Muḥyī.

Shemlelizāde Ahmed Efendi's (d. 1088/1678) *Shīve-i Ṭarīqat-i Gulshanīyya28* is the last exclusively Gulshanī source examined here.[29] Shemlelizāde probably joined the order in Cairo during the tenure of the sixth successor to the order, Shaykh Ahmed, and returned to Bursa during the reign of Mehmed IV (r. 1057-1098/1648-1687). The *Shīve* is the only known text that explicates the rules, regulations, and rituals of the Gulshanīyya. The second part of Shemlelizāde's account depicts the interior dynamics of the lodge. The author also provides fragments of Gulshanī's biography, with a focus on his relations with his *pīr* Rūshanī, Gulshanī's works, and a list of lodges located in the Ottoman lands. Shemlelizāde makes a significant point for the sanctity and saintliness of the founder and the legacy of the Gulshanīyya, which, according to earlier hagiographical sources such as Muḥyī, had initially found voice in Rūmī's poetry. Shemlelizāde interprets Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's (d. 672/1273) announcement of Gulshanī in his *Mesnevī*, some two hundred years prior to the latter's birth, as a powerful point of spiritual legitimization of the order for the descendants of the Gulshanīyya and its offshoots.

The *Shīve* also deserves mention as the first text to depart from an exclusive focus on the deeds of the order's founder and to depict the Gulshanīyya as a Sufi institution. Completed in the mid- seventeenth century, it excludes references to Gulshanī's Oghuz Ata lineage or to any of the controversial and eclectic *meshrebs* of its founder, while providing a detailed esoteric genealogy of the order. Shemlelizāde focuses on the impersonal details of the organization's daily workings, refraining from commentary on political or social issues or on the personalities involved. Such an approach is a distinctive shift from the hagio-biographical genre of the sixteenth century that dominates modern day Gulshanī scholarship.

These and other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century hagiographies and *ṭabaqāt* literature vary in their coverage of the Khalwatīyya biographies and *silsile*s. Thus information in different sources on the Gulshanīyya does not necessary convey similar viewpoints, historical timelines, or information. Their authors prioritize different *silsile*s and sub-branches of the Khalwatī according to their knowledge, sympathies, and personal connections with the order. Most of these authors have more than one Sufi affiliation. Muḥyī and ʿUbūdī penned sixteenth-century hagiographical narratives while serving actively as Gulshanīyya dervishes in the Cairo lodge. Ḥulvī and Hacı ʿAli Efendi wrote their biographical/hagiographical

28 *Muḥyī-yi Gülşenī, Menāḳib-i İbrāhīm-i Gülşenī ve Şemlelizāde Aḥmed Efendi Şīve-i Ṭarīḳat-ı Gülşeniye*, edited Tahsin Yazıcı, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982.

29 Ibid.

narratives in the seventeenth century, much later than Muḥyī and ʿUbūdī. While Hulvi was a Gulshanīyya dervish and deputy who died in Istanbul, Hacı ʿAli Efendi served at the Ottoman court in various capacities. He was affiliated, in varying degrees, with a number of orders. He relied heavily on Ḥulvī and ʿAtaʾi for his work. Additionally, to name a few other Ottoman authors with some or limited level of affiliation with the Gulshanīyya who commented on the order, its origins, founder, and network in their biographical dictionaries/histories include Aşık Çelebi (d. 978/1571), Latifī (d. 989/1582), Nevʿīzāde ʿAṭāʾī (d. 1043/1634).

A number of Arabic and Ottoman Turkish historical chronicles also provide valuable information on Gulshanī and his order. The two most important of these chronicles are Abū Barakat Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭanafī's, famously known as Ibn Iyās's (d. 930/1524) *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr30* and the two manuscript versions of ʿAbdūʾṣ-Ṣamed bin Seyyidī ʿAlī ed-Diyārbekrī's (d. 948/1542) *Nevādirüʾt-Tevārīḫ.31* Both sources are key to understanding the socio-political and religious dynamics of the region's history under the Mamluks and its transition into the Ottomans' reign. The inclusion of Gulshanī and his participation in the historical events surfacing in the chronicles of the period prove that he, and his order, had not only been visible in the public sphere but also played distinctive roles in state and society.

Conclusion

Perhaps the most daunting task facing medieval and early modern Sufism scholars is establishing a historical context for their subject matter, be it a holy individual, Sufi *ṭarīqa*, network, community, and/or a Sufi institution. Typically early modern historical sources do not provide detailed information on holy men, mystics, or Sufi *ṭarīqas* unless they cross paths with military/ruling or administrative elites. Sufis, in early modern historical sources, find commentary in histories or chronicles mainly when they interact, or clash, with religious/ruling of administrative elites. Therefore in order to establish a nuanced historical context for the activities, and career, of a holy man/a Sufi institution, the researcher needs to compare and contrast a variety of primary sources in different genres. Comparing information found in literary, archival, epigraphic,

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30 Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr*, edited by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, Leipzig and İstanbul: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1932 reprint, Cairo and Wiesbaden, 1960-1975; Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr. Edited by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, al-Qāhirah: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmīyah bi-al-Qāhirah, 2008; also, Gaston Wiet, *Journal d'un bourgeois du Caire* (Paris: Libraire Armand Colin, 1955-60, Series: Bibliothèque générale de l'École pratique des hautes études, VIe section.

31 Diyarbekri, *Nevādirüʾt-Tevārīḫ*, İstanbul Ali Emiri Library, Tarih 596 and *Tārīḫ-i Ḫülefāʾ el-Mısr* (*Kitab-i Terceme-i Nüzhetiʾs-Senîye fî Ahbâriʾl-Hulefâ veʾl-Mülkiʾl-Mısrîye*) British Library, MS. Add. 7846.

architectural, narrative, historical, biographical etc. sources with those found in hagiographies is essential to reach a balanced analysis of the subject matter. To wit, revelatory pieces of information about Sufis, and their careers, can also be found in the most unexpected texts—and not necessarily in those that were written contemporaneously either. To search for these unexpected texts and to be willing to rethink established notions on how to write a historical narrative on Sufism related topics requires, among others, an early modern type of sensibility on part of the researcher. Being sure of what constitutes "historical" material when mapping a holy man's historical life is never as straightforward or clear cut as one might like it to be. And this gray zone is what, I argue, rattles most historians who prioritize establishing "absolute" past realities as "historical facts". For those historians, who underline the scarcity of "historically reliable and verifiable" data in hagiographical sources, approach these texts with suspicion. Presumed "unreliability" of hagiographical, or otherwise prose-narrative and biographical type data on Sufism related subject-matter result in dismissal of such materials in most modern day historical analyses and scholarship. For some historians, "fictive", "supernatural", or "esoteric" content of hagiographies also constitute red flags that researchers should avoid. Another commonly phrased blame against texts with mystical/supernatural subject matter is the issue of "authorial biases". Hagiographers are often blamed for writing heavily biased texts that cover, alter, and sanitize the actions of their holy protagonists. While the goal of the dervish author is primarily to eulogize the piety of a *ṭarīqa*'s saintly founder, to demonstrate their supernatural deeds, and to lay out the societal scope of their saintly influence, hagiographies also contain important historical information about the socio-political context on their protagonists. Biased or not biased, these texts provide troves of evidence that supplement data found in biographical or chronicle type sources. Besides, and not to state the obvious, "authorial bias" is a prevalent and ever-present aspect of all writing. Instead of demonizing "bias" in hagiographical texts and use it as an excuse to dismiss them as reliable sources, one should embrace evidence of bias and try to understand the factors that created the circumstances of its production and seek to analyze/contextualize bias to further enrich one's research. Thus predominant and assumed perceptions on "inferior" versus "superior" literary/narrative sources on Sufism must not deter our quest to utilize them to broaden historical understanding.

Where do scholarly studies of the Khalwatī-Gulshanīs fall in the spectrum of Sufism studies today? In trying to answer this question, here I examined the modern day scholarship on the Khalwatī-Gulshanīs as well as the most important primary sources on the founder and the order. As luck would have it, a number of contemporaneous historical and biographical sources (Arabic and Ottoman Turkish) give information on Gulshanī and the activities of the Gulshanīs for the sixteenth century. Therefore, while establishing a historical context for the

activities of the Khalwatī *Miṣrī*-Gulshanīs, situating Gulshanī's activities alongside the socio-political dynamics of multiple neighboring and competing early modern polities—the Aqquyunlu, Ottomans, Safavids, Dulkadirlioglus, and Mamluks—the Gulshanī/Gulshanīyya scholar does not have to rely solely on hagiographical material. Comparison between different genres provides opportunities for a richer and more nuanced historical scholarship on the Gulshanīs—which will also provide a reliable methodological basis for future studies of the order in the seventeenth century and beyond.

Gulshanī, and members of his following/order, moved into the regions where the above-mentioned polities ruled and they interacted with ruling and religious elites in the mid-fifteenth and sixteenth century—which can roughly be described as the period of the order during the founder's lifetime. In the post-founder era, between c. 1534-1600s, the Gulshanīs gradually fostered their *Miṣrī* identity distinct from the many established practices and traditions of Anatolia-based Khalwatī offshoots.[32] They secured a definitive cultural and social niche in the vibrant urban Sufi communities of Cairo alongside *ṭarīqa*s native to Egypt. During this latter period, the order's leadership passed onto Gulshanī's descendants who maintained their connections and networks within the Ottoman ruling and religious establishment in the empire's wide cultural zone in Egypt and Istanbul. In short, the Gulshanīs became influential social, political, and cultural actors both during the lifetime of the founder, and following his death. This particular aspect of the Gulshanis is well worth emphasis since the role of Sufis as influential societal and political actors still remains a controversial conceptual terrain in historical studies of pre-modern Muslim societies.

While a number of historical sources provide some context on how the Gulshanīs operated, their literary corpus, including Gulshanī's works, biographical dictionaries, as well as the posthumously written hagiographies, give valuable and abundant information on the *adab* and *meşreb*, of the order, their networks, as well as the activities of their members and affiliates. The corpus of Gulshanī and the dervish authors depict numerous literary inspirations from famed medieval Arab and Iranian Sufis, philosophers, and poets. Tracing the exact origins and the scope of influence of these muses is a difficult task. As modern scholars of the order studying the rich Gulshanīyya corpus and mystical culture, and determining the inspirations of dervish poets present us with a long series of scholarly challenges.[33]

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32   For the Gulshanīs interactions with political authority ca. 1517-30, see Side Emre, "Confluence of Spiritual and Worldly: Interactions of the Khalwatī-Gulshanīs and Egyptian Sufis with Political Authority in Sixteenth Century Egypt" *Osmanlı'da Ilm-i Tasavvuf*, eds. Ercan Alkan, Osman Sacid Arı, Istanbul: ISAR Yayınları, 2018, 687-700.

33   For an analysis of the order's literature and the inspirations of the Gulshanī dervish poet/authors, see Emre, "Crafting Piety", 31-75.

The internal organizational transformation that the Gulshanīyya order went through as a Sufi institution was extensive. During Gulshanī's lifetime, the teachings and doctrinal foundations of the Gulshanīyya were slowly transformed from the holy founder's individualistic asceticism to a community-based piety, which also heralded the transition from a cult-type following surrounding Gulshanī towards the formation of a pious Sufi community that established themselves in a prestigious lodge in one of the most vibrant neighborhoods of Cairo. This factor alone can be cited as one of the main reasons of their success as an enduring Sufi institution in Egypt, and elsewhere in the wider Ottoman ruled lands.

Hagiographies of Gulshanī, such as those written by Muhyī and ʿUbūdī that were discussed in the above pages, were written after the founder's death. These authors revised and edited questionable, or controversial, contents of Gulshanī's poetry, teachings, and socio-political events that surrounded the founder and the order in the sixteenth century. Most of the information found in these sources was told to hagiographers by fellow dervishes, or close affiliates of the Cairene-Gulshanīs. As these authors were writing, they preserved the memories, or recollections, of people who knew Gulshanī personally, or had direct interactions with him. During the composition of these hagiographies, the events that transpired during the lifetime of the founder were still within living memory and the memories of these events were circulating in Egypt, as well as in other Sufi networks in the empire, where Gulshanī dervishes travelled. Reading these texts and analyzing their content, as was outlined in the above pages, can be a challenge for the Gulshanīyya scholar. However, widening the scope of research into other genres prove beneficial in the long run, especially for the purposes of establishing the historical significance of this important Sufi institution within the context of the early modern history of the Ottoman Empire.

A Study of the Modern-Day Scholarship and Primary Sources on Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī and The Khalwatī-Gulshanī Order of Dervishes

Side EMRE

Abstract

The Khalwati-Gulshani order and its historical projection yield invaluable insights into Mamluk/Ottoman Egypt's socio-political and cultural history in the early modern period. This study introduces and examines modern-day Gulshaniyya scholarship as well as a diversified range of unpublished/published primary sources (in Ottoman Turkish and Arabic) written by Gulshanis and others. The majority of the Gulshaniyya corpus still remains in unpublished manuscript condition today. The evaluation of the historical chronicles of the period, as well as contemporaneous hagiographies, biographical dictionaries, and poetry that make up the vast body of literature created by the founder Ibrahim-i Gulshani and the prolific Gulshanis demonstrate that the Gulshanis held considerable socio-political influence in Egypt and the wider Ottoman landscape in the decades following the region's Ottoman conquest in 1517. By studying and historically contextualizing texts such as hagiographies—usually, and erroneously, dismissed by some as fantastical and unreliable in historical studies—I make the case as to how such sources reveal complex political, social, and cultural insights about Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. Throughout this article, the importance of employing an eclectic methodology, one which unites Sufism related subject-matter and historical contextualization, has been emphasized with the intention to propose a new theoretical framework for understanding the history of Egypt and the Ottoman Empire via the lens of one particular Sufi community and institution.

Keywords: Khalwati-Gulshani Order, Gulshaniyya, Ibrahim-i Gulshani, Gulshaniyya literature.

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Side EMRE

Özet

Halveti-Gülşeni tarikati ve bu tarikatin tarihsel izdüşümü, Memluk ve Osmanlı Mısır'ının erken modern dönem sosyal, politik, ve kültürel tarihi hakkında çok değerli içgörüler vermektedir. Bu makale günümüzde Gülşenilik ile ilgili yapılmış olan akademik çalışmaları okuyucuya sunar. Buna ek olarak Gülşeniler ve diğer yazarlar tarafından Osmanlıca ve Arapça olarak yazılmış belli başlı erken modern dönem kaynaklarını da inceler. Gülşeniler tarafından yazılmış olan kaynakların çoğunluğu günümüzde halen basılmamış olup nadir yazma eserler halinde kütüphanelerde bulunmaktadır. Gülşenilik tarikatının kurucusu olan Ibrahim-i Gülşeni ile Gülşeniler tarafindan yazılmış olan mistik konulu eserler ve şiirler, dönemin diğer tarihi kronikleri, menakıpları ve biyografik sözlükleri ile beraber incelendiğinde, Gülşenilerin Osmanlı hakimiyeti altındaki yakın doğu ve özellikle Mısır coğrafyasında gittikçe artan sosyo-politik nüfuzu ve kültürel tesiri açıkça görülmektedir. Bazı araştırmacılar menakıbların tarihsel çalışmalar için fantastik ve güvenilmez olduğunu düşünselerde biz bu makalede bu kaynakların tarihsel bir çerçeveye oturtulduklarında komplex politik, sosyal, ve kültürel gerçeklikleri yansıttıklarını gösterdik. Bu çalışmada Sufizm araştırmalarında eklektik bir metodolojinin önemini ve Sufizm ile ilgili konu ve temaların tarihsel konumlandırma ile birleştirilmesinin gereğini göstermeye çalıştık. Bu tür bir bakış açısının önemini Mısır ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun erken modern dönem tarihinin bir Sufi topluluğu ve tarikatının tarihsel merceğinden bakıldığında nasıl göründüğünü bu eklektik metodoloji ile ve yeni bir teorik çatı kurgulaması ile okuyucuya sunduk.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Halveti-Gülşeni Tarikatı, Gülşeniler, Ibrahim-i Gülşeni, Gülşenilerin edebi ve mistik eserleri.